

Versailles Treaty: The Boundaries of Germany (June 28, 1919)

Abstract

Although the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were considered too harsh and unjust by both German politicians and the public, the Reichstag was forced to agree to the treaty after a long and controversial debate, in the face of the threat of an invasion by Allied troops and the continued blockade of sea transport. This excerpt from the Treaty of Versailles contains the articles that defined Germany's postwar borders as drawn by the Entente powers.

Since most wars were sparked by territorial conflicts, the ceding of territory was a traditional component of peace treaties. The considerable territorial losses that Germany had to accept on the basis of the Treaty of Versailles, however, not only affected economically important areas, but also an estimated nine to twelve million Germans who now lived in a different state. The territorial losses, which were perceived as unjustified, were to burden Germany's foreign relations with the Entente powers throughout the Weimar Republic and strengthen nationalist and right-wing extremist groups such as the National Socialists.

Source

Part II.

Boundaries of Germany.

Article 27.

The boundaries of Germany will be determined as follows:

1. *With Belgium:*

From the point common to the three frontiers of Belgium, Holland and Germany and in a southerly direction:

the north-eastern boundary of the former territory of neutral Moresnet, then the eastern boundary of the Kreis of Eupen, then the frontier between Belgium and the Kreis of Montjoie, then the northeastern and eastern boundary of the Kreis of Malmédy to its junction with the frontier of Luxemburg.

2. *With Luxemburg:*

The frontier of August 3, 1914, to its junction with the frontier of France of the 18th July, 1870.

3. *With France:*

The frontier of July 18, 1870, from Luxemburg to Switzerland with the reservations made in Article 48 of Section IV (Saar Basin) of Part III.

4. *With Switzerland:*

The present frontier.

5. *With Austria:*

The frontier of August 3, 1914, from Switzerland to Czecho-Slovakia as hereinafter defined.

6. *With Czecho-Slovakia:*

The frontier of August 3, 1914, between Germany and Austria from its junction with the old administrative boundary separating Bohemia and the province of Upper Austria to the point north of the salient of the old province of Austrian Silesia situated at about 8 kilometres east of Neustadt.

7. *With Poland:*

From the point defined above to a point to be fixed on the ground about 2 kilometres east of Lorzendorf:

the frontier as it will be fixed in accordance with Article 88 of the present Treaty;

thence in a northerly direction to the point where the administrative boundary of Posnania crosses the river Bartsch:

a line to be fixed on the ground leaving the following places in Poland: Skorischau, Reichthal, Trembatschau, Kunzendorf, Schleise, Gross Kosel, Schreibersdorf, Rippin, Fürstlich-Niefken, Pawelau, Tscheschen, Konradau, Johannisdorf, Modzenowe, Bogdaj, and in Germany: Lorzendorf, Kaulwitz, Glausche, Dalbersdorf, Reesewitz, Stradam, Gross Wartenberg, Kraschen, Neu Mittelwalde, Domaslawitz, Wedelsdorf, Tscheschen Hammer;

thence the administrative boundary of Posnania north-westwards to the point where it cuts the Rawitsch-Herrnstadt railway;

thence to the point where the administrative boundary of Posnania cuts the Reisen-Tschirnau road:

a line to be fixed on the ground passing west of Triebusch and Gabel and east of Saborwitz;

thence the administrative boundary of Posnania to its junction with the eastern administrative boundary of the Kreis of Fraustadt;

thence in a north-westerly direction to a point to be chosen on the road between the villages of Unruhstadt and Kopnitz:

a line to be fixed on the ground passing west of Geyersdorf, Brenno, Fehlen, Altkloster, Klebel, and east of Ulbersdorf, Buchwald, Ilgen, Weine, Lupitze, Schwenten;

thence in a northerly direction to the northernmost point of Lake Chlop:

a line to be fixed on the ground following the median line of the lakes; the town and the station of Bentschen however (including the junction of the lines Schwiebus-Bentschen and Züllichau-Bentschen) remaining in Polish territory;

thence in a north-easterly direction to the point of junction of the boundaries of the Kreise of Schwerin, Birnbaum and Meseritz:

a line to be fixed on the ground passing east of Betsche;

thence in a northerly direction the boundary separating the Kreise of Schwerin and Birnbaum, then in an easterly direction the northern boundary of Posnania to the point where it cuts the river Netze;

thence upstream to its confluence with the Küddow:

the course of the Netze;

thence upstream to a point to be chosen about 6 kilometres southeast of Schneidemühl:

the course of the Küddow;

thence north-eastwards to the most southern point of the reentrant of the northern boundary of Posnania about 5 kilometres west of Stahren:

a line to be fixed on the ground leaving the Schneidemühl-Konitz railway in this area entirely in German territory;

thence the boundary of Posnania north-eastwards to the point of the salient it makes about 15 kilometres east of Flatow;

thence north-eastwards to the point where the river Kamionka meets the southern boundary of the Kreis of Konitz about 3 kilometres north-east of Grunau:

a line to be fixed on the ground leaving the following places to Poland: Jasdrowo, Gr. Lutau, Kl. Lutau, Wittkau, and to Germany: Gr. Butzig, Cziskowo, Battrow, Böck, Grunau;

thence in a northerly direction the boundary between the Kreise of Konitz and Schlochau to the point where this boundary cuts the river Brahe;

thence to a point on the boundary of Pomerania 15 kilometres east of Rummelsburg:

a line to be fixed on the ground leaving the following places in Poland: Konarzin, Kelpin, Adl. Briesen, and in Germany: Sampohl, Neuguth, Steinfort, Gr. Peterkau;

then the boundary of Pomerania in an easterly direction to its junction with the boundary between the Kreise of Konitz and Schlochau;

thence northwards the boundary between Pomerania and West Prussia to the point on the river Rheda about 3 kilometres northwest of Gohra where that river is joined by a tributary from the north-west;

thence to a point to be selected in the bend of the Piasnitz river about 1½ kilometres north-west of Warschau:

a line to be fixed on the ground;

thence this river downstream, then the median line of Lake Zarnowitz, then the old boundary of West Prussia to the Baltic Sea.

8. With Denmark:

The frontier as it will be fixed in accordance with Articles 109 to 111 of Part III, Section XII (Schleswig).

Article 28.

The boundaries of East Prussia, with the reservations made in Section IX (East Prussia) of Part III, will be determined as follows:

from a point on the coast of the Baltic Sea about 1½ kilometres north of Pröbberbau church in a

direction of about 159° East from true North:

a line to be fixed on the ground for about 2 kilometres;

thence in a straight line to the light at the bend of the Elbing Channel in approximately latitude 54° 19½' North, longitude 19° 26' East of Greenwich;

thence to the easternmost mouth of the Nogat River at a bearing of approximately 209° East from true North;

thence up the course of the Nogat River to the point where the latter leaves the Vistula (Weichsel);

thence up the principal channel of navigation of the Vistula, then the southern boundary of the Kreis of Marienwerder, then that of the Kreis of Rosenberg eastwards to the point where it meets the old boundary of East Prussia.

thence the old boundary between East and West Prussia, then the boundary between the Kreise of Osterode and Neidenburg, then the course of the river Skottau downstream, then the course of the Neide upstream to a point situated about 5 kilometres west of Bialutten being the nearest point to the old frontier of Russia;

thence in an easterly direction to a point immediately south of the intersection of the road Neidenburg-Mlava with the old frontier of Russia:

a line to be fixed on the ground passing north of Bialutten;

thence the old frontier of Russia to a point east of Schmalleningken, then the principal channel of navigation of the Niemen (Memel) downstream, then the Skierwieth arm of the delta to the Kurisches Haff;

thence a straight line to the point where the eastern shore of the Kurische Nehrung meets the administrative boundary about 4 kilometres south-west of Nidden;

thence this administrative boundary to the western shore of the Kurische Nehrung.

Article 29.

The boundaries as described above are drawn in red on a one-in-a-million map which is annexed to the present Treaty (Map No 1.)

In the case of any discrepancies between the text of the Treaty and this map or any other map which may be annexed, the text will be final.

Article 30.

In the case of boundaries which are defined by a waterway, the terms „course“ and „channel“ used in the present Treaty signify: in the case of non-navigable rivers, the median line of the waterway or of its principal arm, and, in the case of navigable rivers, the median line of the principal channel of navigation. It will rest with the Boundary Commissions provided by the present Treaty to specify in each case whether the frontier line shall follow any changes of the course or channel which may take place or whether it shall be definitely fixed by the position of the course or channel at the time when the present Treaty comes into force.

Source: The Treaty of Peace with Germany, June 28, 1919, *International Law Documents*. Naval War College, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920, pp. 18–21.

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